

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NICOSI 00800 271425Z

46

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

AID-05 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-10 SY-04 /071 W

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O 271350Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1256

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR//ECJ-2//

UNCLAS NICOSIA 0800

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: CY PFOR MARR

SUBJ: CONTINUED PRESS PLAY ON AMERICAN MILITARY PERSONNEL IN
CYPRUS

REF: NICOSIA 0787

1. SUMMARY: FEBRUARY 27 GREEK CYPRIOT PRESS GAVE SENSATIONALIST
TREATMENT TO STORY OF ARREST OF FOUR AMERICAN MILITARY PERSONNEL
AND TREATED FACT OF THEIR BEING STATIONED AT AKROTIRI AS MAJOR
EXPOSE. END SUMMARY.

2. COMMUNIST HARAVGHI HEADLINES "AMERICAN FORCES STATIONED AT
AKROTIRI", LEFTIST TA NEA CALLS "AMERICAN PILOTS, SPIES OF TURKS",
CENTERIST AGHON BLAZONS "NEW SCANDALOUS ACTION BY BRITISH",
RIGHTIST MACHI RED-HEADLINES "SCANDAL: AMERICAN MARINES ON OUR
BASES". STORIES FOLLOWING THESE HEADLINES GENERALLY REPEAT
DETAILS OF ARREST AS CARRIED BY FEBRUARY 26 AGHON AND REPORT THAT
GOC SPOKESMAN HAD NOTED THAT GOVERNMENT IS CONTINUING ITS INVEST-
IGATION. MOST PAPERS ALSO CARRY LURID ACCOUNTS OF PURPORTED NATO
INTEREST IN BASES, AMERICAN SPYING EFFORTS, ETC.

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PAGE 02 NICOSI 00800 271425Z

3. PRO-GOVERNMENT PHILELEFTHEROS ONLY PAPER TO CARRY CALMER LINE REPORTING NICOSIA PAO'S COMMENTS THAT A) DETAINED PERSONNEL HAD NOT BEEN MARINES BUT AIRFORCE, B) THAT CHARGES OF SPYING OR ROCKET BASE CONSTRUCTION WERE GROUNDLESS AND C) THAT AMERICAN EMBASSY WOULD HAVE NO COMMENT ON TRANSIENT AMERICAN PERSONNEL AT AKROTIRI BUT THAT THE GOC HAD BEEN FULLY INFORMED OF THEIR PRESENCE. HARAVGHI ALSO CARRIED PAO'S RESPONSE BUT SENSATIONA- LIZED TREATMENT OF STORY ANYWAY.

4. IN FEBRUARY 27 NOON BRIEFING FOR LOCAL PRESS GOC PIO, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, STATED THAT GOC WAS NOW CONVINCED THAT THERE WAS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING SUSPICIOUS IN BEHAVIOR OF FOUR DE- TAINED AMERICANS, THAT PHOTOS HAD BEEN SIMPLY "TOURISTIC SCENES." RE GENERAL ISSUE OF AMERICAN TROOPS AT AKROTIRI BASE, SPOKESMAN MERELY STATED THAT GOC HAD BEEN AWARE OF THEIR PRESENCE THERE. HE DECLINED TO COMMENT ON HOW MANY OR HOW LONG THEY HAD BEEN THERE, ADDING ONLY THAT THEY WERE NOT THERE ON PERMANENT BASIS.

5. COMMENT: WE WILL UNDOUBTEDLY GET MORE ON THIS TOMORROW. IT IS MUCH TOO JUICY AN ISSUE FOR LOCAL PRESS TO DROP NOW.
CRAWFORD

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NNN

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